

Whether you are a new or experienced local food consumer or producer, the following list will help you stay up to date with your *local food lingo*.



Acequia: Historic communal irrigation systems that are the backbone of agriculture in our arid region. Acequias are earthen or concrete lined ditches that carry diverted surface water from streams and rivers to agricultural fields. They also offer a variety of added positive benefits, such as contributing to community green space and creating habitat for wildlife.

Community Garden: A plot of land that is gardened by a group of people to produce fruits, vegetables and/or flowers. These plots can also be home to chicken keeping for egg production. Community gardens exist in both urban and rural settings, and many are located on vacant lots, at schools or community centers, or on donated land. Food may be grown communally, or families may have individual garden plots or beds.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): A system of direct marketing in which consumers “invest” in a farm for the growing season, and in return receive a weekly or monthly payout of fruits and vegetables. Many CSA's also include meats, cheeses, or value added products in addition to fresh crops.

Drip Irrigation: A system of irrigation that uses pipes and drip lines to irrigate crops, either directly at the soil surface or sub-surface at the root zone. This system can provide a number of

benefits including weed reduction and water conservation.

Farmers' Market: A direct marketing approach where consumers purchase goods from growers and producers in a market setting. New Mexico has over 50 [farmers' markets](#) where the freshest produce, meats, cheeses, breads, and other goods can be found. Many markets also have artwork for sale, or live music and entertainment.

Flood Irrigation: A style of traditional irrigation that is common to our region, where fields are irrigated with surface water from acequia systems.

Food miles: The distance food travels from the farm to your plate. On average food travels 1,500 miles, but by eating locally this number can be greatly reduced.

Foodshed: A defined area from which food is grown, processed, purchased, and consumed. We currently have a global foodshed, with products coming from a variety of places around the world. The local food movement aims to bring the foodshed closer to home, with foodsheds ranging from 100 miles to a larger multi-state region.

Free-range: A method of farming/ranching in which livestock are allowed to "roam freely," instead of being confined to a feeding stall or cage. The term is most commonly associated with but not limited to poultry. Similar terms include "cage free," "humanely raised," and "pastured livestock."

Genetically Modified Organism (GMO): An organism that has had its genetic material altered through genetic engineering. In relation to food and agriculture, this would include, plants, seeds, and livestock that have been genetically engineered in a lab to increase yields, pest resistance, or enhance desired traits. GMO's are a major concern to communities trying to preserve native seeds and/or traditional practices.

Grass-fed: A term to describe livestock that forage freely on grass and legume pastures, rather than being fed corn and grains in confined feedlots.

Locavore: Someone who seeks out locally grown and produced foods. The word locavore was the New Oxford American Dictionary word of the year for 2007.

Natural: This term is most often used to describe meats and other goods that are minimally processed and contain no artificial ingredients or colors.

No-Till Farming: A method of farming where the soil is not plowed or turned before planted. This method reduces erosion of both soil and nutrients, while increasing organic matter in the soil.

Organic: Organic generally means a product that is certified to be grown and/or produced without synthetic pesticides or fertilizers, hormones or antibiotics, and is GMO free. Someone can grow with organic *methods* but choose to not be certified.

Value-Added Product: A raw agricultural product that has been modified or enhanced to be a product with a higher market value and/or a longer shelf life. Some examples include fruits made into pies or jams, meats made into jerky, and tomatoes and peppers made into salsa.